

Information Literacy

Course Description:

This course is designed to give students the introductory knowledge, skills, and tools they need to navigate through a fast-paced, information-rich, highly-connected 21st-century world. Over 12(?) weeks, students will:

- Question the role of technology in their lives and in society.
- Become skilled at evaluating websites.
- Learn how to protect themselves and their information online.
- Practice strategies for informal and formal research and discover the resources available to them online and through the library.
- Develop an understanding of how to avoid plagiarism and copyright infringement.
- Experiment with presentation tools for a variety of audiences and purposes.
- Explore the functions and uses of various types of social media.

Through collaboration, discussion, critical thinking, writing, reading, presenting, practice, and real-world application, students will explore these aspects of information literacy and will, by the end of the course, understand what it really means to be good digital citizens.

Unit 1: What Can Technology Do for Us? What *Should* Technology Do for Us? Is Technology for Technology's Sake a Good Thing or a Bad Thing?

Students will brainstorm, discuss, write about, and explore some of the ways that technology benefits, changes, and complicates their lives in order to think critically about technology's place in our current society and in the future.

Focus on: iPod apps (getting into what these can do for the kids now that they have them!), favorite online tools, technology in our day-to-day lives, ebooks

Unit 2: Is This a Good Website?

Students will learn various criteria by which to evaluate websites and will practice critiquing websites and choosing websites for various purposes.

Focus on: author/authority, domains, multiple perspectives, citations/references, fact-checking, depth/breadth of information, access, advertisements

Unit 3: How Do I Protect Myself Online? How Do I Protect My Information Online?

Students will learn ways in which to preserve a level of anonymity and protect their personal identities online. They will also explore the ways in which work and information can be created, stored, and saved online, and the ways to back up and protect any personal information or work that they put online.

Focus on: Online privacy, personal information (name, location, pictures, etc.), red flags, secure information (passwords, SS#, credit card information), backing up your work, saving information online (Google Docs, OpenOffice, e-mail servers, etc.)

Unit 4: How Do I Find Information?

Students will learn strategies for effectively and efficiently finding information using an Internet search engine (Google), and they will translate and build on these strategies in Galileo and the school's subscription databases. They will explore the different tools that Galileo and other subscription service have to offer.

Focus on: Choosing the right resource(s) for a particular research question or purpose, searching for basic, everyday information in Google, search tips and tricks, strategies for formal research, finding resources for a hypothetical research project

Unit 5: How Do I Know if I'm Plagiarizing?

Students will look at ways that copyright, fair use, and plagiarism come into play in real-life, relevant situations.

Focus on: Using the work of others in our own content creation, breaking down copyright laws into easy-to-understand rules, defining plagiarism, strategies for avoiding plagiarism

Unit 6: How Can I Present Information?

Students will learn how to use and will practice using various presentation tools, including PowerPoint, Prezi, websites, and iMovie. They will brainstorm and discuss the different pros and cons of using various presentation tools for different audiences and purposes.

Focus on: learning how to use some new technology, defining audience and purpose, avoiding flashiness/gimmicks in presentations, creation a personal presentation with a specific audience and purpose in mind

Unit 7: What Exactly is Social Media, and What can I Do With It?

Students will look at some of the functions of various social media tools (Facebook, Twitter, blogging, etc.) and decide when they might be useful in hypothetical relevant situations. Students will not actually create their own accounts for social media tools in this class.

Focus on: learning about various social media tools and exploring their functions, defining some of the uses of social media tools, (business, fundraising, communication, advertising, party planning, group projects, etc.), and choosing the BEST tools to meet a defined audience and purpose.

Example: Many businesses today have a website, a Facebook page, a Twitter account, and a blog. Do all businesses really need all of these things? What is the audience of each of these social media tools looking to see? What should a business share in each social media format? Websites allow for providing a lot of detailed information about products and the scope of a business, and can be a good place for customers to look for hours, contact information, prices, menus, etc. A Facebook page allows a business to share some of this information, but is also a forum for customers to communicate and provide feedback and for businesses to promote special events for promotions. Twitter allows a business to share a small piece of information or to post a reminder or a news update. A blog is a place for a business to share a detailed news update, to write about the current state of things, to highlight a special event, or to share photos and ideas.